

122
Vol 350 1
REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE

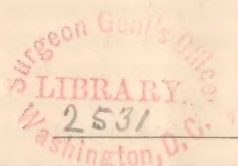
APPOINTED BY THE
Vol 350

PHILADELPHIA MEDICAL SOCIETY,

AT A MEETING HELD ON THE 27th OF JUNE, 1859,

TO TAKE INTO CONSIDERATION

CERTAIN STATEMENTS MADE AT THE LAST MEETING OF THE MEDICAL
SOCIETY OF THE STATE OF PENNSYLVANIA RELATIVE TO THE
APPLICATION FOR ADMISSION TO A REPRESENTATION
IN THE SAID SOCIETY.



PRINTED BY ORDER OF THE SOCIETY.

PHILADELPHIA:
COLLINS, PRINTER, 705 JAYNE STREET.
1860.

R E P O R T .

At a meeting of this Society held on the 27th June, 1859, the undersigned were appointed a committee to take into consideration and report upon certain statements ventured upon at the last meeting of the State Medical Society, by several individuals—some of them members of this body—relative to events connected with our application for admission to a representation in the last mentioned Society, and to the retirement of the undersigned, and many of their colleagues, from the Philadelphia County Medical Society; as well as to the motives of action and mode of proceeding of some of the actors in those events. The statements in question appeared to the members of this Society, and to the undersigned among them, to be of a sufficiently serious character to call for a pointed reply, inasmuch as they were not only in great measure unfounded in point of fact, or based on groundless surmises or far-fetched inferences, but generally of an offensive nature.

The necessity of this reply will be the more apparent when it is known that those statements were listened to patiently and with seeming satisfaction—certainly without eliciting the most remote sign of denial or disapprobation, or a single word of protest, not merely by the professional acquaintances of the persons attacked, but by some of their intimate friends and every day companions, who were naturally supposed to know the degree of reliance that could be placed on what they were listening to, and whose silence on the occasion could not fail, on that account, to be interpreted into an acquiescence in its truth.

Let it be mentioned also, that all this took place at a public meeting of the State Medical Society, in presence not only of the delegates of the Philadelphia County Society, but also—what to us is of greater moment—in the hearing of a considerable number of members of the societies of distant counties, to say nothing of public reporters and visitors—professional or otherwise. From all these circumstances the inference is natural, that statements so boldly and publicly made, so silently listened to—without check or hindrance on the part of colleagues or friends—are likely, unless refuted, to produce an impression derogatory to the moral character and professional reputation of many of the members

of this Society, on the minds of medical brethren, whose good opinion they should be sorry to forfeit, and through them of the profession and public at large.

That the anticipation of such a result is not imaginary, is to your committee a matter placed beyond doubt, for it has come to their knowledge that some of the country delegates to the State Medical Society, basing their views on what they heard on the occasion referred to, and on the fact that nothing was said in opposition, have remarked that we were treated as we deserved to be, inasmuch as our course in the transaction evinced a forgetfulness on our part, of the provisions of the Code of Ethics, in accordance with which, the conduct of every honorable and high-toned physician should be shaped, while a similar charge continues to be urged against us, by some physicians of this very city, who when asked for their reasons, do little more than repeat what they heard at the meeting in question, or what they understood was there affirmed.

It had been our intention, as, indeed it was our duty, to collect ere this all the facts within our reach relative to the doings of the State Medical Society on the occasion to which allusion is here made, and to prepare and present a special and elaborate reply to such parts of them as appeared to us, for the reason assigned, to be objectionable. But circumstances beyond our control have, until now, prevented us from performing that task.

It is necessary to bear in mind, for a correct appreciation of what is to follow, that this Society, for reasons which it is unnecessary to mention on the present occasion, suspended some years ago its meetings, leaving its funds in the hands of the Treasurer, and its library in the custody of the College of Physicians. The resolution relative to this measure was passed on the 13th December, 1845, and was in the following words: "*Resolved*, That the sessions of the Society be, and are henceforth, suspended until a formal call be made by the members signed in the manner prescribed by the constitution."

From this, it will be perceived that the members of the Society could, at any time, resume their regular meetings, and once more carry out the object of their association, provided they observed a certain mode of proceeding indicated in the resolution. In this state of inactivity, the Society remained until about two years ago, when at the suggestion of the chairman of your committee, a number of members assembled for the purpose of taking into consideration the propriety of reviving it. At this meeting the question was carefully examined, and, acting under the conviction that it was improper, in view of the antiquity of the Society, of the large number and respectability of its members, both residents and non-residents, of its possessing a certain amount of funds, and a library which should be taken care of and applied to useful purposes:—recollect-

ing, also, the usefulness of the association in former days; and impressed with the belief that but little effort was required, under existing circumstances, to replace it in the position it once occupied, and impart to it the eminence it had for a long series of years enjoyed, the gentlemen present resolved unanimously to go through the prescribed formality. A call to that effect, signed by thirteen members, R. La Roche, F. G. Smith, Jr., W. W. Gerhard, J. J. Reese, J. B. Biddle, S. L. Hollingsworth, Edw'd Hartshorne, A. E. Stocker, W. S. W. Ruschenberger, Isaac Hays, G. W. Norris, Francis West, D. Paul Lajus, was transmitted to the President, Dr. R. M. Huston, by whom a general meeting was called in the usual way—through the medium of the newspapers. This meeting took place on the 3d of April, 1858. Others succeeded. The Society was reorganized. The By-laws were modified. Officers were elected, and a number of new members have gradually been admitted, consisting, in many instances, of gentlemen who had never been attached to the County Medical Society, of some who are still attached to that body, and of several, who, displeased with its recent proceedings, have left its ranks or joined ours.

At a meeting held on the 24th of May, 1858, a proposition was made and carried, to memorialize the State Medical Society, which was shortly to assemble at Lancaster, to the effect of obtaining from that body the right of representation for such of our members as were not connected with the County Medical Society, and did not possess, in virtue of that connection, the privilege of being represented, or of sitting in the capacity of delegates in the former. This proposition was based on the supposition that inasmuch as the State Society, at its meeting held at Reading, in May, 1849, had authorized the County of Philadelphia to organize three Medical Societies, of which the College of Physicians was to be one; and, although on the refusal of the College to accept the proffered representation, the authorization in question was cancelled by the repeal of that part of the resolution by which it had been conferred, there did not appear to us any reason to presume that the State Society could have a valid objection to granting our application, and that it would refuse to one respectable Society a boon it had offered to another. To this opinion we were particularly inclined, from the conviction that the memorial was so worded as to banish all idea that we entertained a desire to interfere with the County Medical Society. We did not ask for a representation for the entire number of our members; inasmuch as many of these being already connected with that Society, they would, had such a demand been made and granted, have had the privilege of being twice represented. So far from doing this, we solicited a representation in favor of such only of the members of this body, as were not already represented in the other. In other words, we requested permission to send to the State Medical Society one delegate for every five members, who were not at the same time mem-

It never was disorganized or broken up. See p. 4 - fourth page.
How & by whom - by the 13 calling the meeting - no - by 9 or 10 - H

It was not until after the meeting of the State Soc. was unceremoniously received.
This change however desirable to some, met the decided disapprobation of a majority of the College at a subsequent meeting of the State Soc. was unceremoniously received.
It was not until after the meeting of the State Soc. was unceremoniously received.
It was not until after the meeting of the State Soc. was unceremoniously received.

only interrupted by a few functionists

bers of the Philadelphia County Society. The permission was not asked in a spirit of opposition or ill will to any existing body. We asked it, as remarked in our memorial, because we thought there was reason in the size of the Philadelphia County Medical Society, and the large basis of population, which it now represents, for such a concession to this Society. We asked it because we were satisfied that the measure would conduce to the harmony and good order of the profession in Philadelphia. We asked it because we thought it would promote the efficiency and spirit of our State organization. We asked it, too, under a guarantee from the character of our body, that it would be discreetly exercised. And, finally, we asked it under such limitations that it could work no injustice to any portion of the profession in our State or city.

The proposition of presenting the memorial in question was at first warmly opposed by one of the members present, who had long expressed his intention of attending the forthcoming meeting of the State Medical Society at Lancaster. His principal objection to the measure was founded on the effect which he thought it would likely produce on the County Society, and on the erroneous idea he had adopted that no restriction was made in the memorial as to the class of members in favor of whom the privilege of representation was asked. But when the matter was fully explained and the true state of the question relative to the point of double representation was placed before him, he waived his objection and promised not to oppose the measure at Lancaster; with the understanding that, in the event of its being favorably entertained there, a general meeting of this Society would be called for the purpose of submitting the question of acceptance, and that notification be given of the object of the meeting.

The member alluded to was true to his promise of not opposing our memorial at Lancaster. But he fulfilled that promise by not attending the meeting. In other words, he may be said to have dodged the affair. While doing so, however, he appears to have neglected nothing calculated to secure our failure. He informed his associates in the County Medical Society of the proposed memorial, and of all that had taken place at the meeting at which the discussion relative to it had taken place. The names of those who moved, seconded and advocated its presentation—the numbers present at the meeting, and the name of the member by whom the said memorial was to be presented at Lancaster, were all stated. Delegates to the latter place were urged to go with a view to defeat, if possible, the success of the memorial. Letters, long and earnest, were addressed to influential country delegates, requesting them to oppose the measure, &c. &c. *Yardley*

The result was, not the rejection of our petition, but its postponement till the next meeting, which the committee of nomination, under the

guidance of its city member—a strong opponent of the said measure—decided should be held in this city. At the same time a member from Lancaster County moved, as an alteration of the Constitution, that in such counties where the population admits, the profession have the right or privilege to form an additional society for every 200,000 inhabitants, no person being permitted to hold membership in more than one County Society, and such societies to be numbered according to seniority. The plan of holding in this city the meeting of the State Society, at which the question was to be decided, was successful. The delegation from the County Medical Society, consisting of some forty members, constituted a little less than one-half of the whole number that assembled on the occasion. The very large majority of these were known to be opposed to the granting of our petition, as also to the resolution of the member from Lancaster, and had probably been selected in consequence of their entertaining such views, or because they were supposed to be easily indoctrinated by the leading opponents. In an assemblage so organized—with a large phalanx of opponents from the very city in which the petitioning society is located, and with a balance composed of country members who took but little interest in the question at stake; in which none of the petitioners were, or could be, present to defend their cause, and exhibit the case in its true light, and in which even their personal friends allowed them to be grossly assailed, the issue could not be doubtful. After some discussion the whole matter—our memorial and the resolution of the member from Lancaster—was, on motion of Dr. C. H. Hill, of Montgomery Co., a gentleman who had never before figured in the Society—indefinitely postponed.

In this discourteous manner, a petition worded in the most unexceptionable terms, and presented by a body of professional gentlemen, on every score as respectable as any of the individuals who cast their votes on the occasion, and entitled, to say the very least, to be treated with politeness, was disposed of at a meeting composed in great measure of members of a Society in which the opposition to the measure sprung up, and by whose leaders the excitement against the petitioning association was kept up.

However well founded may be the displeasure we all experienced at seeing our memorial treated in so cavalier a manner, the committee would not have thought it necessary to recur to the subject, inasmuch as allowance must be made for the fact that gentlemen are not always as regardful of the feelings of others as they ought to be, and that to this circumstance rather than to a voluntary violation of the rules of politeness or to a direct manifestation of disrespect, are often to be attributed proceedings of an apparently offensive character.

But during the discussion which took place on this occasion, some of

the leading spirits of the Society, not content with treating the petitioners in the discourteous manner mentioned—*i. e.*, by advocating and carrying the resolution relative to indefinite postponement—exceeded all allowable bounds of offensiveness towards them, by opposing the measure under examination, not by pointing out the disadvantages that might in their estimation result from its adoption to the medical profession, to the State Medical Society, or to the County Society, but by resorting to an array of disrespectful misstatements and groundless assertions—attributing our action in the premises to motives of a dishonorable nature, and ascribing the resignation of such of our members as had left the County Medical Society to reasons very different from those by which they were actuated, and which, if well founded, would very greatly impair their claims to the respect of honorable and high-minded gentlemen.

To baffle the more effectually the efforts of the petitioners, some of the proceedings of the County Medical Society during the year 1858 were raked up in the hope of being able to point out in the part those petitioners played in them some circumstances calculated to lessen their claims to the regard of the assembly. Of the points taken up for that purpose, and of the assertion, and remarks in which the opponents indulged, the following summary has been prepared from the reports of several gentlemen present, among whom may be mentioned two members of your committee.

1. It was stated that the two committees appointed by the presiding officer of the County Medical Society at the meeting of October, 1857, to nominate officers for the following year, were composed of individuals selected by a few interested members with a view to the attainment of certain special ends; and that the names of those individuals being handed up to the President, were approved of by him at once, and without examination and reflection.

2. It was stated that though each of the lists of the committees thus composed was prepared and handed up by a different set of gentlemen, it was well known that these had played into each other's hands and had by some "*hocus pocus*"—to use words employed on the occasion—so arranged matters as not only to secure for themselves a prominent position in the said committees, but to insure the nomination of such friends as would be disposed to act in concert with them and accede to all their suggestions.

3. The State Society was informed that the two committees thus formed through the underhand management of a clique, had been constituted in the way mentioned in order to secure the nomination on both tickets of the same leading members of that clique, or of their friends, to the same offices, and thereby to insure their return at the forthcoming election more securely than could be done in the ordinary way, and especially through the instrumentality of one committee—the other being permitted to contain other names.

4. It was said that the influential spirits of the two committees, fully understanding the views of each other, had succeeded in attaining the object they had in view by exerting a sort of spell over such of their colleagues as were not initiated in their mysterious dealings.

5. It was stated that the Society, being displeased at this mode of proceeding on the part of the committees, and decidedly opposed to the choice made by both of an unpopular member to fill an office of importance, had rebelled, and taking the matter into their own hands, had cast off the objectionable candidates and elected other individuals of unexceptionable character.

6. Again, it was contended that finding themselves defeated in the attempt to force themselves and their friends into office, the leaders of these committees had succeeded by underhand manœuvres in inducing the Society, at a meeting packed for that purpose, to adopt the unconstitutional measure of annulling the election, and that the selection of officers being again referred to the same committees, they had reported the same members as before; upon which the Society, at a very full meeting, once more cast off the objectionable nominees and re-elected most of those who had before been chosen.

7. It was in addition affirmed, that a few of the ambitious members connected with these proceedings, now perceiving their inability to mould the County Medical Society to their views, and to monopolize all the offices in its gift for themselves and friends, had resigned, and, hunting up this "old Philadelphia Medical Society, had galvanized into it some little life," in the hope, that the State Medical Society would allow its members to be therein represented, and that it might ultimately, through the enlargement of its ranks, supplant the County Society.

8. It was asked, somewhat contemptuously, who and what the individuals were that had left the County Medical Society, and were now applying for admission into the State Society, and the audience was told coolly and deliberately, that those individuals were of no account, and especially insignificant in point of numbers, and that they were actuated by the disappointment resulting from the failure in attaining the object they had in view.

9. The Philadelphia Medical Society was represented as being destitute of scientific status—as little more than a 'debating club—established originally by the Medical Faculty of the University of Pennsylvania for the benefit of the students, who in order that they might be able to listen to the debates were enrolled in the ranks of the Society as Junior members. From this it was inferred that this Society was not an institution worthy of being represented in the State Society.

10. It was stated that the Philadelphia Medical Society enumerates among its members individuals who have ceased to be in communion with

the regular profession—quacks of various sorts, eclectics, homœopathists, &c.—and who could not, in consequence, sit as delegates, or be represented in the State Society; that the admittance into its ranks of students who certainly could not be connected in any way with that Society, disqualified it from a representation therein; and that in consequence of the roll of its members containing a large number of names of physicians residing in distant parts of this country, and in Europe, its delegation would be too large, and would represent a vast number of individuals who very naturally take little, if any, interest in the professional affairs of this city or State.

11. The State Society was assured that our association had been positively dissolved at a meeting held some years before, and that its library had been given away, in perpetuity, to the College of Physicians, in whose hands it was then, and would, in virtue of this act of donation, remain. From all this, it was given to understand that the Society had, by this process of dissolution, virtually given up its charter, and no longer possessed a legal existence; and that hence the few discontented individuals who, in a moment of irritation growing out of their disappointment, had left the County Society, had no right to hatch up the deceased association.

12. One of the orators on that occasion informed his audience that he had attended some of the meetings of this Society, of which he is a member, and, with the view, as it may be presumed, to show its insignificance and its little claim to admission into the State Society, added that those meetings usually consisted of five or six gentlemen; that a legal quorum could seldom be obtained, and that the little business transacted was the work of what might be called a nominal quorum. Finally, it was asserted by the same individual, that in recommencing the sessions of the Society, especial care had been taken, by the prime movers in the transaction, to give notice of the meeting in a few of the most obscure papers of the day; and that his own attention had been directed to the notice by the merest chance.

To these statements we have the following answer to offer. In doing so, we do not deem it necessary to take up each item of accusation separately and in direct succession. Nevertheless we shall notice them all as closely and effectually as our limits will permit.

We must premise that the object we have in view being, not so much to incriminate the parties who indulged in the statements above mentioned, or who appeared, by their silence and their subsequent vote, to admit their correctness, as to vindicate the course pursued by, and the professional and moral character of such of the members of this Society as were concerned in the controversy, we shall endeavor to refrain from unnecessary personalities, and avoid, as much as the nature of the present report will permit, all remarks and expressions of an offensive kind.

The remarks made relative to the manner in which the committees of nomination, so much complained of, were formed, are not founded in fact. Those committees were not organized in the way or for the purpose stated. For the truth of this, so far as relates to one of them, the writer of the present report can vouch, for he was himself more instrumental in getting it up in the form it assumed than any one else; and he has no hesitation in affirming that neither he nor any of the gentlemen engaged in the matter were actuated by the motives ascribed to those who suggested to the presiding officer the names of the individuals appointed by him. The history of this committee is easily told. A few members who chanced to be sitting together, after talking over the matter, jotted down some names, selected from among those of individuals whom they happened to see, and who appeared to them suited to the office. One of the gentlemen engaged in this consultation declined serving. Dr. Neill, who was close by, also declined, and turning to the writer, said, "I hope you will put your name down for President." On the answer being that this would certainly not be the case, and that in the event of such a nomination being made the position would be declined, Dr. N. added, "Then nominate Dr. Bell; for he fully deserves all the honors we can bestow upon him." This, by way of parenthesis, and for the information of Dr. Bell, who may not be sorry to learn by whom his name was originally suggested, and to whom he is, in consequence, indebted for his subsequent elevation to the highest position in the gift of the Society.

The other committee, we feel convinced, was filled up in the same unpremeditated manner. Neither of them was forced on the presiding officer—who, on this occasion, happened to be Dr. Bell, one of the Vice-Presidents of the Society. The lists of names handed to him were only intended as objects of suggestion; other members might, if they had thought fit, have presented similar lists. The chairman of your committee, when the list to which his name was attached was placed on the President's desk, certainly was not aware that another list had been presented, and he cannot understand how the authors of the latter could have known that either he or his friends had prepared one, and especially what names had been placed upon it. The presiding officer could have rejected both those lists. He could have made out, himself, two others composed in part or in whole of other names. But he chose to act differently. He accepted both lists exactly as they were presented to him, except in this, that he placed the name of Dr. Biddle at the head of one of the lists instead of that of another gentleman who had been suggested as chairman, on account of his being the senior in point of age.

A few of the members of those two committees may, in their individual capacity, have conversed together and exchanged opinions relative to the choice of certain officers. This is invariably the case every year. We

The confession covers the whole ground

have had evidences of that several times. But no one has ever found fault with gentlemen for so acting. It is the most natural thing in the world that it should be so. It could not, indeed, be otherwise; for it must, as a matter of course, happen that when gentlemen are appointed to perform a duty such as the one which falls to the lot of committees of the kind, they will compare views on the subject and come to an understanding respecting the claims which certain individuals have to particular offices. At the same time we unhesitatingly affirm that the committees, as such—the members of them in their corporate capacity—had no conference together. All that one of the speakers, whose philippic we are now answering, has said relative to the dissatisfied members of the County Medical Society having by some “hocus-pocus” so arranged the committees of nomination as to put themselves into them, and to the committees having played into each other’s hands so as to nominate the same individuals for the same office on each ticket the more effectually to carry their point, is a dream of the imagination. The committee of which the writer was a member was arranged by no “hocus-pocus” of the sort alluded to. Of that he is very certain. Equally certain is he that when the committee had been constituted, and had proceeded to discharge the duties assigned to it, there was no understanding between it and its brother committee—no playing into each other’s hands—to effect the object said to have been contended for.

When the committee met, the first point to be settled was the selection of a candidate for the office of President. The suggestion made by Dr. Neill at the meeting of the Society relative to Dr. Bell was kept in mind by the members, and his name, after some conversation, was placed on the ticket. We may say that had it not been for the suggestion of Dr. Neill another choice would very probably have been made.

It was decided that one of the Vice-Presidents should be chosen from among members residing in the city proper, and the other out of those located in one of the districts. The individual selected to fill the latter position was Dr. Mayburry. For the office of city Vice-President, the names of several gentlemen were presented and their respective claims to the position freely canvassed. The present writer proposed Dr. Neill as a person in every way entitled to the choice, from his age, his professional and social standing, and his well merited reputation as a practitioner and a teacher of surgery in a respectable school. The proposition was at once acceded to, and the name of Dr. Neill was inscribed on the ticket. The entire Board of Censors was retained. This was not done without some demur on the part of two members of the committee—Dr. Biddle and the present writer—on the ground that forming, as they did, part of the said Board, they might be supposed to have taken advantage of their position in the committee to secure their permanency in office. Dr. Biddle also gave as a reason for wishing to be replaced by some one else, that he had

Dr. Neill was elected President.

served long enough and would like to be relieved from the duties of the office. But these objections being overruled by their colleagues, on substantial grounds, they yielded.

The office of Treasurer was left in the hands of Dr. R. P. Thomas, who had filled it during several years to the perfect satisfaction of the Society. The name of the member selected for Secretary is not now recollected. With a view to facilitate their proceedings in the choice of individuals to be placed on the lists of delegates to the National Medical Association and to the State Medical Society, the committee went over the roll of the members most carefully—writing down, as they proceeded, the names of those who appeared to them most likely to meet the approbation of the Society, and to be elected to either, or to both of the delegations. This was done with as much fairness as was possible; the principle upon which the preference was given being—after paying due regard to the question of equality in point of number, to the representation in the various sections of the city and districts—the likelihood of those so selected attending the meetings of those bodies, and more particularly of the National Association. In regard to this Association, it may be remarked that, in consideration of the fact, that the well known case of Dr. Reese, of New York, for the part he had played in the McClintock affair, was to be brought up at its forthcoming meeting by a committee of the very body in whose services we were then acting, it behooved us, as we thought, to introduce in the delegation as many members as we possibly could, consistently with other obligations, as we felt confident would observe a straightforward and firm course in the matter, and carry out the views of the Society.

In reference to the proceedings of the other nominating committee, all we need mention is, that by it, Dr. Bell and Dr. Neill were placed in the same positions they occupied in the first mentioned ticket, while Dr. Hatfield was selected as the other Vice-President. At whose suggestion this choice was made we are not informed; but we feel persuaded that neither the nominations of the two first named gentlemen to the Presidency and Vice-Presidency of the Society, nor the selection of any other of the members to positions similar to those assigned to them by the other nominating body, were the effects of collusion among the individuals composing that committee. Especially sure are we, that the said result was not the offspring of a secret "hocus-pocus" arrangement between the two committees. The writer of this Report had two friends on the committee in question, who would most certainly have spurned any mode of proceeding having the most remote semblance to unfairness, secret pre-arrangement or collusion, and too clear-sighted to fail to detect such a thing, had it been so palpable as to be easily discovered by others. The same thing may, he feels confident, be safely said of two other members with whom he is less intimate, but in whose integrity and high sense of honor he implicitly

relies; while of the fifth, who is no less a personage than the member who brought up the charge against the committee, it may be remarked, that he could not well have entertained, at the time of the occurrence, the opinion he afterwards expressed on the floor of the State Society. He served, as we are assured, harmoniously with the other members of his committee. He did not complain at the time, of any "hocus-pocus" arrangement. He said nothing about the two committees playing into each other's hands for the purposes mentioned. He voted in the committee for all the individuals placed on its ticket. When the same committees were, as will soon be mentioned, again required to form tickets, he once more voted for a return of the same names. He voted in the Society with his colleagues and their friends, on all the exciting and party questions that were raised. He some time after told the present writer in the most positive manner, on reference being made to something that had been said about unfair conduct and collusion on the part of the committees, that the report was unfounded, and that everything done by them had been fairly done. That he entertained that opinion then, may indeed be inferred, in the absence of the above statements, from the fact not only of his harmonious action with the rest of his committee; but of his not entering a protest in the Society or out of it, relative to the conduct of his associates, supposing that conduct to have been such as he subsequently represented it to have been. By his not having done so, the accusing member must assume a due share of any responsibility that may rest on the committee, of which he formed part, in relation to its action in the matter.

2. The statement that the Society at the next regular meeting, disapproved of the choice which the committees of nomination had made regarding certain offices, adopted a course of an unusual character, and taking the matter into their own hands, selected other men in the place of those submitted for their sanction, is true. It is true, also, that at an adjourned meeting of the Society, this election was annulled; and that at a subsequent election which took place with the view of filling the vacancies occasioned by the operation of this last mentioned measure, the revolutionary movement effected before was re-enacted, though in a somewhat modified form. Finally, it is equally true, that the action of the Society on these occasions, excited feelings of discontent in the minds of many of its members, and may, to a certain extent, be regarded as the originating cause of the agitation by which its peace has been so greatly disturbed, and its ranks so considerably diminished. But admitting all this to be undeniable, it does not follow, that the statements to which reference is here made are all strictly correct, or that the motives and mode of proceeding of all the actors in the drama, as also the cause of the displeasure they felt, are represented in the most proper light. The history of the transactions will show that this denial is well founded; while it will

*has its peace been disturbed, and has its ranks
diminished. It is painful & oppressive to the*

enable all to perceive that the conduct of those who did not scruple to traduce such of the members of this body as took part in the proceeding, before the State Medical Society, or as have given, by their silence, an implied approval to what was said on the occasion, was not of a nature to entitle them to much praise, and that the feeling of discontent alluded to could not help being excited in the minds of gentlemen endowed with a due share of the sense of honor and self-respect.

On the day of the election, which followed the reports of the two nominating committees, the Society met in fuller force than usual. The opponents of the tickets submitted, objected, as it subsequently appeared, principally to the nomination of Dr. Neill to the office of Vice-President. He had become unpopular with a few of the leading members of the Society, and by them the excitement against him was aroused. They determined to secure his rejection, and at the same time, visit with their displeasure, those who they presumed had been most instrumental in placing him as a candidate before the Society. They also thought fit, as it would seem, to punish, if possible, the presiding officer for having acceded, without modification, to the suggestions made in regard to the composition of these committees, and to exclude from the delegations as many of Dr. Neill's friends, or the friends of the members of the committees that had nominated him, as they possibly could. Members were drummed up for that purpose. Many attended who seldom before had honored the Society with their presence. A scratched ticket was handed about, in which the names of the objectionable candidates were erased, and others substituted. The result was that Dr. Bell very narrowly escaped losing his election—twenty-three out of some sixty votes being cast in favor of Dr. Janney, of Spring Garden. Dr. Neill was left out. Two of the censors—Dr. S. Lewis and the chairman of your committee—were treated in the same way, and replaced by Drs. Yardley and Jewell; while considerable changes were made in the delegations. It is impossible to resist the conclusion that this revolutionary movement was the effect of preconcerted arrangement or collusion; for Dr. Janney was the only candidate run against Dr. Bell; the two individuals raised to the Vice-Presidency were the only ones balloted for, and on the tickets from which the names of the two unsuccessful censors were erased, Dr. Lewis' was invariably replaced by Dr. Yardley's, and that of the present writer by Dr. Jewell's. Such occurrences could not be the effect of mere coincidence.

As soon as the result was announced, Dr. Biddle and Dr. Rodman, who had been re-elected censors, declined serving, stating as their reason, the affront that had been cast on their rejected colleagues. Dr. Stillé, Dr. E. Hartshorne and others, were nominated to fill the vacancies thus created, but declined, for analogous reasons, to accept the proffered office. Dr. Jewell tendered his resignation on the ground of his disinclination to step

He was unpopular, not with a few but a majority of members.

into a position from which Dr. La Roche had been ejected. At last, on its being found that the organization of the Society could not be completed that evening, the subject was postponed to an adjourned meeting to be held in a week. But when the time arrived the members, who assembled in large numbers, instead of limiting the business of the meeting to the selection of three Censors, to fill the vacancies existing in the Board, annulled the election, on the ground of its having been carried by illegal votes, and once more referred the formation of lists of officers to the same nominating committees. On this occasion, Dr. Bell, whose pride was wounded at not having received a unanimous vote at the preceding election, declined, in the most positive terms, being any longer a candidate, and stated that had the election not been annulled he would have resigned the office. Not satisfied with this, Dr. Bell addressed a long letter to the chairman of each of the committees of nomination, expressing his firm determination not to accept the Presidency should he be elected. Dr. Thomas, the Treasurer, also declined serving any longer. The committees met and renominated the same officers they had chosen before, with the exception of the two gentlemen above mentioned—the first of whom was replaced by Dr. Yardley, and the latter by Dr. Curtis. As before stated, at the ensuing meeting of the Society which, through the operation of various influences brought to play in the matter, was one of the largest as yet seen, the tickets submitted by the committees of nomination were again, though not so considerably, modified. Dr. Bell was easily induced to forget his mortification, and reverse his decision, and Dr. Yardley having withdrawn, and there being no other candidate in the field, he was elected. Dr. Thomas also consented to serve, and was elected. The Board of Censors was this time left undisturbed; but Dr. Neill was once more dropped by a large majority; while Dr. Biddle, Dr. Wister, Dr. Hollingsworth and others, were left out of the delegations.

Now to maintain, as some have done, that such a course on the part of the Society—a course never pursued before in that body—towards gentlemen endowed with a due share of the sense of honor and self-respect, ought to have been submitted to with perfect indifference, must, we have no doubt, appear most extraordinary. No one conversant with the history and present condition of the medical profession in this city, and with the proceedings of the County Medical Society, from its origin to the period of the events under present consideration, will refuse to admit that Dr. Bell, in view of his age, the respectability of his professional standing, and his services in the Society, was as much entitled to the honor of being raised to the presidential chair, as any of his colleagues; and that the twenty-three members, who by setting up a candidate of their own choice in opposition to him, and by casting their votes against him, endangered his

This is not a fair statement. Just objection was made on the ground of its illegality.

election, paid him a very questionable sort of compliment, for which he could not be thankful. But at the same time it will be confessed that this estimable gentleman, sore as he must have felt, had far less cause than other sufferers on this occasion for complaining of the treatment experienced at the hands of the Society; for after all he was not dropped, and the office to which he had been nominated by the committees was not given to another. The only objection he could make to the proceeding, was that he had not received a unanimous vote, and that a considerable number of the members present were in favor of electing another individual. And yet Dr. Bell was so highly offended and mortified at having failed to obtain such a vote, and to be raised, as it were by acclamation, into the presidential chair, that he declared both on the floor of the Society, and subsequently in writing, his unwillingness to run again for the office. It is true he soon adopted a different course, and consented, on being pressed by one or two members, to allow his name to be replaced on the ticket. But let us suppose that instead of being, as was the case, elected by a small majority, he had been rejected by a large one at the first election; let us suppose again that having very unexpectedly, and to the astonishment of many, consented once more to run, he had been, not elected, but again rejected, what would have been his feelings? Judging from what took place when the provocation was trifling—for few men in a popular society can expect to obtain an office by a unanimous vote, especially in times of excitement—we may presume that that gentleman would not have been slow in expressing, in the loudest tones, his displeasure at the occurrence. No one would have been surprised had he resigned from the Society and protested in print, against the action of the leaders of the party instrumental in casting the affront upon him.

If such is the case, and if no one can find fault with Dr. Bell for feeling as he did, with what justice can Dr. Neill and those who shared the same fate at one or both elections, and were dropped from the tickets to make room for other individuals not a whit better than themselves, in point of professional or social standing—and that too, to gratify the personal dislike of a few meddlesome leaders—be found fault with for having felt offended at the treatment they experienced? How can their friends be said to be unreasonable for having resented the insult offered them, and endeavored to soothe their feelings by annulling the election and placing them in the position from which they had been ejected? How can they be blamed for continuing to resent that same insult, when repeated two weeks after? Will it be said that what was right in the case of Dr. Bell, was wrong in the case of the others? Will it be said that that gentleman had a greater prescriptive right to the office he had been elected to fill, than Dr. Neill and others had to the offices to which *they* had been nominated; and, therefore, that it was natural *he* should be offended at being

dropped, or at receiving less than a unanimous vote, while the Society was at liberty to do as they pleased in regard to the others, without giving them any just right to complain? Why should the one be considered to possess more claims to the office of President, than Dr. Neill to that of Vice-president of the Society? With all the kind feeling we entertain for the former, we cannot admit the justness of any such supposition. We feel persuaded that Dr. Bell himself, with his characteristic modesty and just appreciation of the merits of others, would hoot at the idea. Difference of age excepted, they stand exactly on the same footing in a professional and social point of view; and if the complaints of the one at being disappointed in his aspirations to be raised to an important office in the gift of the Society, for which he had been suggested by the Nominating Committee, can be regarded as fully justified, few dispassionate observers will refuse to recognize in the other an equal right to be offended at being treated in the same way. Especially extraordinary will such a denial appear when it is borne in mind that in the former case the cause of offence was not the successful election of an opposing candidate, but the fact that a number of the members present had entertained the thought of setting up such a candidate; while in the latter case the complainant, far from being elected by a small majority at the first trial, and by a large one at the second, was rudely thrown overboard at the two successive elections.

But, however this may be, we do not hesitate to say that the displeasure growing out of this revolutionary movement was not based on the disappointment produced by the failure in obtaining offices desired with the view of enabling the possessor to govern the Society. Not one of those who were dropped in the way mentioned, cared for the mere possession of office. None sought office. None desired to be placed on the lists of officers by the Nominating Committees. Some, as the present writer, for sure, would have preferred to be left out, and earnestly requested his colleagues to appoint some one in his place. But, having been nominated, none of the gentlemen concerned in the matter could feel otherwise than offended at being so uncourtously dropped. Such was the cause of complaint. The rest that has been said on the subject is all sheer invention.

Nor is it less certain that whatever may have been the degree of displeasure created by the occurrence in question, no one can justifiably refer to that circumstance alone the numerous resignations which took place among members of the County Medical Society. In other words, it is not true, as stated at the meeting of the State Medical Society, that the disappointed aspirants for office in the former society resigned after the result of the election had made it clear to them that they could not expect to control that body. Those resignations were the effect of a different cause. Had this cause not occurred—had the result of the revolutionary move-

*his statement is certainly not in accordance with
proceedings both before & after the election*

ment been the only exciting influence operating on the minds of many of the members—we may safely say, knowing as we do more of the history of the controversy than those who busied themselves about it in the State Society, that, discourteous and offensive as the course pursued undoubtedly was, few if any of the resignations in question would have been sent in. That one or two gentlemen who felt themselves particularly insulted, expressed at the time a disposition to retire from the Society, is true. It is true, also, that some, disposed to resent the offence given to their friends, spoke of declining the offices to which they had been elected. But it is equally certain that those gentlemen were all induced to change their minds on the subject. They were reminded of the manner in which the movement had been gotten up, and of the character of those who had been mainly instrumental in effecting the objectionable result. They were shown how proper it would be to abstain from leaving the Society, unless its members should by their future conduct prove their inability to act in a way more satisfactory to gentlemen regardful of the courtesies of polite society. Satisfied with these reasons, they remained, and those among the discontented who had been elected to office, continued for some time longer, to discharge the duties assigned to them. As an evidence of this, and to show the utter erroneousness of the statement that the resignations from the Society were caused by disappointment growing out of the results of the election in question, we may state that these results occurred in January, 1858, while the first secession from the Society took place in January, 1859; that is, a year after. The other resignations followed in more or less rapid succession, and several, as we understand, were sent in at the last annual meeting of the Society. During this interval, *i. e.*, from Jan. 1858 to Jan. 1859, several of the gentlemen alluded to not only continued in the Society, but were not remiss in the performance of their duties as members of important committees. The present writer attended as a delegate from the Society to the National Medical Association, at its meeting at Washington, and to the State Medical Society at Lancaster, while, in conjunction with Drs. Biddle, Rodman, and Lewis, he took an active part in the proceedings of the Board of Censors. To this we must add that, on both the tickets presented by the Committees of Nomination in October, 1858, preparatory to the election of the following January, the same gentleman figured as president, Dr. Rodman as vice-president, and Drs. Biddle and Lewis as censors. All of them accepted the proffered nominations, and, although feeling no apprehension as to the sanction of the Society, subsequently withdrew their names, and refused to serve if returned, for reasons presently to be mentioned.

Nothing, certainly, in this mode of proceeding, can in any way lend support to the assertion that the resignations so much talked of, of these and other gentlemen, followed close upon, and were the effect of the dis-

*X But, not one of the gentlemen took any interest in the
 proceedings were never seen there afterwards*

appointment experienced at the result of the election of 1858, and at the discovery on their part that they could not monopolize all the offices and govern the Society. The cause must, as we have already stated, be sought elsewhere, and will easily be found in a transaction which occurred at the commencement of 1859, and which our accusers in the State Medical Society strangely forgot, or purposely omitted to mention. We allude to the case of Dr. Turnbull. This individual was arraigned before the Board of Censors, consisting of Drs. Biddle, Rodman, Lewis, Condie, and the chairman of your committee, for a breach of medical ethics. The Board, after a full examination of the circumstances of the case, found the accused guilty of the offence, and, though sensible of the fact that that offence would have justified his expulsion, recommended to the Society that he be reprimanded by the president—the lightest punishment recognized by the constitution—on the ground that he recognized his error and expressed his regret at having committed it. The report of the censors, after an animated and offensive debate, was unceremoniously dismissed by a vote of an indefinite postponement. Upon this the censors, who had had full warning of the efforts that would be made to obtain a result of the kind, and had unanimously decided as to the course they were, in that event, to pursue, declined running for the offices to which they had been nominated for the next election, which was to take place the same day. The Society feeling, to a certain extent, that they had erred by passing a vote of indefinite postponement, which was equivalent to a vote of censure on the censors, reconsidered the case of Dr. Turnbull at a special meeting subsequently called for that purpose, and decided that he had been guilty of the offence for which he had been condemned by the censors; but, at the same time, refused to carry out to the full extent the recommendation of the Board, by ordering him to be reprimanded by the president.

It was the indignation growing out of the offensive vote of indefinite postponement in a case of such importance in an ethical point of view; of the doctrine on which that vote was predicated—*i. e.*, that the Society could not take cognizance of the case because the aggrieved party was not enrolled among its members—in other words, that those members could violate the code of ethics provided it was not at the expense of their colleagues; of the seeming satisfaction with which insulting remarks relative to the proceedings of the censors, and in which a friend of the accused, with characteristic coarseness, thought fit to indulge, were received; as also of the refusal on the part of the Society, to affirm the punishment recommended by those officers, after the correctness of their finding had been fully admitted, that induced four out of the five members composing that board and many others to leave the ranks of the Society. To this measure they were the more inclined on reflecting that the Society was, by its course in this instance, but confirming what had been made manifest by the proceed-

ings of the year before, that its leading spirits and the majority of its members were not to be trusted under circumstances involving party or personal feelings. It may be that the proceedings in the Turnbull affair, as those of the preceding year, might, if considered singly and independently of each other, have been viewed as unimportant, or at any rate as insufficient to induce members to abandon the Society. But, coming as they did in such rapid succession, the two cases acquired influence, and their occurrence fully justified the conclusion to which those members arrived, *i. e.*, that the object for which the Society was organized was in great measure lost; that it could, through the influence of a few ambitious agitators, be easily made to deviate from a straightforward line of conduct; that it could scarcely be regarded as capable of carrying out strictly and without demur the provisions of the code of ethics, and that it was in the hands of a set but little likely to secure harmony in its ranks, or with whom they could co-operate with unalloyed pleasure, or with any prospect of success.

To the sneering inquiry, *who* were those *few* members of this Society, who having for the reasons attributed to them, left the County Medical Society, were now seeking a representation in the State organization? we answer that among those who had already sent in their resignation at the time the question of granting our memorial was under discussion, or whose intention of doing so had been announced, we find the names of Drs. F. G. Smith, A. Stocker, E. Hartshorne, S. Lewis, Hollingsworth, J. Biddle, G. W. Norris, P. Lajus, C. Wister, O. Wister, J. Hopkinson, F. West, L. Rodman, C. P. La Roche, W. Keating, J. B. McClelland, and the writer of the present report. Others who had expressed a positive determination to follow the same course, and contributed by the expression of their intention in confirming the others in their resolve, have, we regret to say, failed to do so; but their intention had been openly spoken of, and could not but be known to the propounder of this impolite inquiry. Nor could he have been ignorant of the fact that if the notes of resignation of some of the gentlemen mentioned, had not been read at the meeting of the County Medical Society, which took place just prior to the gathering of the State Society, the circumstance was due to the fact that they had been forgotten in the desk or pocket of the President, who having some other engagement to attend to, neglected to discharge, that day, the duties of his office. Most of the gentlemen above named had been active members of the County Medical Society—the greater number of them from the outset of its organization. Now let any one competent to judge in matters of this kind compare them, as well in regard to professional and social position as to efficiency of service, with the *active* and *attending* members remaining in that Society—let him compare them with the leaders in the revolutionary proceedings referred

By the 16 mentioned only had been active.

to—let him compare them especially with the long tail of members who, through the instrumentality of their votes aided in carrying out the views of those leaders, and he will at once perceive how little point or application there is in the stigma.

To this we may add, that among those who memorialized the State Society, were some highly respectable physicians who had never been and had never wished to be connected with the County Society; and who, therefore, could not be taxed with disappointment at not being able to monopolize all its offices and control its proceedings.

But whatever may have been the number and professional standing of the gentlemen who left the County Medical Society—whatever may have been the circumstances that induced them to resign: and whatever the time when their resignations were sent in, the statement that the revival of this Society followed, and was a consequence of, these resignations—or to use words said to have been uttered, that the “few disaffected and disappointed aspirants for office who had been unable to control the County Medical Society had resigned, and hunting up the old Philadelphia Medical Society, had galvanized into it some little life”—is destitute of foundation. The history of this revival will show that at the time it occurred, none of the resignations referred to had been sent in, and we think ourselves fully justified in stating, that it was not the intention of any one of the gentlemen concerned, to leave the County Medical Society. That the revival took place after the excitement growing out of the election of 1858 cannot be denied; but it is not less certain that it was effected several months *before* the Turnbull affair, which, as we have shown, was the real exciting cause of the retirement of several members of that body.} Thus the special meeting at which our Society was reorganized, took place on the 3d of April, 1858, and the application to the President, on the part of thirteen members, to call that meeting, was forwarded some ten days or two weeks before. The first resignation was sent in nine months *after*—in January, 1859. So far from having left the County Society at the time of the revival, many of those who were foremost in advocating the measure held office in that body, and several of them had consented to allow themselves to be put in nomination for the most important positions, *i. e.* presidency, vice-presidency, censorship—to say nothing of the several delegations. The chairman of your committee was in that category, for he had not left the County Society, and certainly had no intention of leaving it at the time he presented the memorial of this Body to the State Society, at Lancaster. The very fact of his being the bearer of that document, shows that his connection with the County Society had not been dissolved; inasmuch as in the latter event, he could not have been at Lancaster in the character of a delegate.

It cannot be said in justice to the ground in the case

This took place in May, 1858, and his resignation was not sent to the President before April of the next year.

This certainly does not look as if the revival or reorganization of our Society can, in any way, be associated with the resignation from the County Medical Society of some of its discontented members; for the former event did not follow, but preceded the latter. Besides, even had this not been the case, it would be difficult to discover what advantage could have accrued to those who left that Society from reorganizing the other. It was certainly not the hope of obtaining, through the revived Society, an admission into the State Society, since but very few of our members had forfeited any such admission; nearly all of them continuing, as they did, to be members of the only body that sends delegates to the State Association from this county; and some of them being at that very time on the list of delegates, or named to fill thereon vacancies that had occurred after the annual election. Independently of this, it may be stated in further corroboration of the want of connection between the resignations in question, and the revival of our Society, that this measure was strongly advocated by several members of the County Medical Society, who never had the intention of leaving it, and who, to this hour, have not left it; and yet, nevertheless, continue to attend our meetings and take part in our proceedings.

The object of reviving the Philadelphia Medical Society, we repeat, was not a desire to obtain, through its means, admission into the State Society. That desire could exercise, for the reason mentioned, but a secondary influence in the matter; inasmuch as it could have reference to the interest of only a limited number of our members, *i. e.* those who did not already enjoy the advantage attached to the privilege of being represented, or of sitting as delegates in the State Society; in other words, to those who did not belong to the County Medical Society, and notwithstanding their aspiration on the subject of the privilege in question, felt no inclination to connect themselves with it. When, in the progress of time, for reasons referred to, members of our association had in no small number retired from that Society, the class of those interested in obtaining a representation in the State Society, greatly enlarged. It is still more considerable now. But in the origin it was quite limited, and might have remained so to this day, had the County Medical Society followed a more judicious and less offensive course.

To the members of this Society, we need not say that the object of arousing it from its slumbers and "galvanizing into it some life," was very different from what it was represented to be. The idea originated with the individual who now addresses you, long before there had been any difficulty and discord in the County Medical Society. In a conversation which took place between him and a gentleman, who also was and is a

member of this Society, the subject was referred to, and it was agreed to consult some friends and urge their co-operation in the matter. The reasons by which we were influenced, were, as subsequently stated in our memorial, that the suspension of the sessions of the Society was always a matter of regret to very many of its members; that it had maintained a long career of dignity and efficiency; that it was too old and of too respectable a character to be allowed to expire completely; that upon the roll of its members were to be found almost all the honored names of the early day of American Medicine; that it enumerated among its living home members, many of the best professional men in the country, and among its foreign associates a number of the magnates of our calling; that a respectable portion of the profession in Philadelphia, cherishing an attachment to its historical associations, and regretting the loss of its ethical influence, were anxious to turn to account its means of usefulness, and desired to renew its active operations; that it was a chartered institution, possessed a good library and a certain amount of funds. It was proposed that in reviving it we should modify its by-laws, and make it, as much as possible, a working body, and that, while imparting to it a somewhat more popular element than is found to belong to some other societies in this and other cities, we should avoid infusing into it so much of that element as to render it a receptacle for every individual dubbed with the title of M. D. In suggesting the measure, it was not supposed that we were interfering with any existing Society—still less with the County Medical Society, which can have no pretension to being held up as a scientific body, and whose claims to the regard of the physicians of the city is mainly based on the circumstance that it constitutes the only link between them and the State Medical Organization. These matters were long the subject of casual conversation between our members, but were only finally decided upon in the early part of the year 1858. Of course, as already stated, the difficulties which occurred in the County Medical Society a very few months before the meeting preparatory to the re-organization of the Society, had nothing to do with this measure. The latter would certainly have been adopted had no difficulties occurred. The proposition to memorialize the State Medical Society was an after-thought, in no way connected with the idea of re-organizing the present body, and in submitting it, its advocates had no other objects in view than those we have mentioned.

The statement that this Society had ceased to exist—that it had been formally dissolved by virtue of a resolution passed years ago, and that its library had been given to the College of Physicians, must amuse those who are acquainted with the true nature of the transaction. Especially will they be amused when they learn that one of the individuals who boldly made the statement at the meeting of the State Medical So-

ciety told a friend, who repeated it to the writer, that he had in his possession a copy of the resolution by which the dissolution in question had been effected. If such a resolution was passed, and if a copy of it is in the hands of the individual referred to, the event must have occurred in 1845—for the minute book of the Society shows plainly, that since that period no mention is made of anything connected with the subject of the permanent discontinuance of the meetings. Now we have seen that by the resolution passed on the 13th of December of that year, it was agreed, not that the Society should be dissolved, but only that its weekly meetings should be “suspended until a formal call be made by the members.” That the individual who made the statement, and some of the opponents of our memorial, who listened to it, and by their silence seemed to give their voucher to its correctness, did not know that it was perfectly unfounded, is to us matter of astonishment. For if the Society had really been extinguished by the resolution of 1845—the only one that could have produced that effect—no meeting could have been held since. Now these gentlemen cannot have forgotten that such was not the case—that meetings did take place subsequently to that time, and, what is more, that some of them took part in the proceedings of those meetings. Thus the Society was called together on the 16th of April, 1846—a year after its supposed dissolution—to consider upon the proposition of electing delegates to the National Convention about to assemble in New York. On this occasion Dr. Bell acted as Secretary *pro tem*. The meeting adjourned to the 20th. Present—among others—Dr. B. H. Coates in the chair—Drs. Condie, and Bell.

A delegation was appointed, headed by Dr. Bell, and consisting, besides that gentleman, of Drs. Bond, Norris, J. Parrish, Warrington, Stillé, J. R. Paul, West, Emerson, Caspar Morris, and Clymer. All of these, as near as is recollected, attended the Convention, and took part in its proceedings.

Another meeting of the Society, for the same purpose, was called in April of the next year, when a delegation was appointed to the same Convention. This delegation was again headed by Dr. Bell, and consisted of Drs. Bell, Emerson, J. Parrish, Norris, West, Ashmead, Coates, Bond, S. G. Morton, Yardley, Griscom, and Rodman—all of whom attended.

Again, in 1848, the Society met for the purpose of appointing delegates to the National Association at its meeting in Baltimore. The following gentlemen were selected: Drs. Coates, Ashmead, Bell, Emerson, J. Parrish, West, Griscom, Rodman, Bryan, Jackson, and Biddle—all of whom, with the exception of Drs. Coates and Emerson, attended to the duties of their appointment. In the following year—1849—the Society met again, and appointed the following members as their representatives to the same Association which, on that occasion, assembled in Boston: Drs. La Roche,

Coates, Rodman, Hallowell, Clymer, Griscom, Stocker, and W. Keist. Of these, Drs. Coates and Stocker alone were unable to attend.

After that period the number of delegates appointed by the County Medical Society, which had just sprung into existence, added to those sent by the College of Physicians and other Medical Institutions of the city and county, embracing all our physicians who could well be spared, it was not thought expedient or necessary that this Society should send a separate delegation. Hence no meeting was called.

This was certainly doing well for a Society dissolved in 1845!!

To the reason assigned against our admission into the State Medical Society, that this body was destitute of scientific status—that it was nothing but a debating Society—and that it was organized by the professors of the University of Pennsylvania, for the purpose of affording to their students opportunities for listening to debates on medical topics, we may oppose, that the proceedings of the Society in former times and down to the period of the suspension of its weekly meetings, were as strictly of a scientific character, as those of any other medical association in this or other American cities. None but papers or essays on practical subjects, or on matters connected with the science of medicine, or its accessory branches, were read. What else is done in other societies, we are unable to discover. Discussions on the subjects of these communications was elicited, just as is the case elsewhere. The Society, it is true, published no transactions; but the communications read and discussed at its meetings, often found their way into the medical journals of the day. Besides, many other Societies whose scientific status is not denied, publish no transactions. The College of Physicians, to which was offered a delegation in the State Medical Society, was in that position for some forty years. May we not ask now where the proofs of the scientific status, and where the transactions of the County Medical Society, through the instrumentality of whose members our application was rejected, are to be found? What scientific matters are investigated at its four stated meetings? What is done at its monthly gatherings, if not to read papers—when such things can be procured—and discuss them? Admitting, then, that our Society was really in former days, a sort of debating club, it does not follow that it had no scientific status—still less must it follow that the rejection of our memorial could on that ground be justifiable. But be this as it may, we cannot but suspect that it was perfectly well known to those who urged the objection, that, whatever may have been the fact relative to the character of the Society from the time of its origin to the period of its suspension—the intention of those who aroused it from its slumbers was, to make it a working Society, and that the remodelling of its by-laws was based on this object.

As regards the little item of history relating to the purposes for which

the Society was originally instituted, and to the individuals by whom the transaction was effected, we have but a few words to say. We cannot find where the information was obtained. The organization of the Society occurred at a period too remote from our own, to have enabled the informant to speak from personal knowledge of the fact. He must have derived it from some published record. With such a record we are unacquainted. It has escaped our search. Until, therefore, it is produced, we shall be forced to doubt its existence, and the correctness of the fact alluded to. The archives of the Society are silent on the subject. The minutes of the early meetings have long been lost, and could not have been consulted, and have furnished the record in question. We are the more disposed to doubt the fact, from the circumstance that this piece of history was communicated to the State Medical Society by the same individual who stated that he possessed a copy of the resolution by which this body was dissolved. The one item is probably entitled to the same degree of confidence as the other.

That the Society contains what are called junior and non-resident members, and that its roll of members is disfigured by the names of a few individuals who are not within the pale of the regular profession, is true. But the most trifling inquiry would have sufficed to show to those who started the objection, that few of the junior members are likely in future to be found among students—that the greater number of them will henceforth consist of young graduates under 26 years of age; that *all* those now connected with the Society are of that category; that this class of members being by the constitution precluded the right of voting, it was not, and could not be the intention of the memorialists to ask for them, and especially for those who had not yet received the honor of the doctorate a representation in the State Society. The boon could only be solicited in behalf of the honorary members. Nor could the fact of the Society containing on its roll a number of non-residents be urged as a reason for rejecting our memorial; inasmuch as it never could occur to the framers of that instrument to proportion the representation asked for to a full list of members made up of residents and associates residing in other places, whether in this country or abroad. The latter class could not be sent as delegates, could not unite with the resident members in electing delegates, and could not, therefore, be represented.

As to the quacks, homœopathists, and physicians not in communion with the profession, whose names are still to be found on our list of members, we may remark that they have fallen since their admission into the Society; the further intrusion of men of the same character is now impossible—provision to that effect having been made in the new by-laws. To this we add that the individuals alluded to have not attended the meetings of the Society since its reorganization; that no notice of these

meetings is sent to them; and that they would not have been included in the roll when apportioning the number of delegates to that of members entitled to a representation.

We have only to add a few remarks relative to the statements made by a member of the State Medical Society, that he had attended the meetings of this Society; that no legal quorum had been present; that in recommending its sessions, especial care had been taken, by a few interested parties, to give notice in the most obscure papers of the day; and that his own attention had been directed to the notice by the merest chance.

In the first place it is difficult to understand what the individual who thus impugned the character of the gentlemen engaged in resuscitating this Society, by indirectly charging them with acting in an illegal manner, means by there not being a legal quorum on the occasions of his favoring them with his company. Prior to the time the Society was reorganized—in 1858—the by-laws were silent in relation to the number of members that should constitute a legal quorum. The proceedings, therefore, prior to that time, would have been perfectly legal, had the number of members who took part in them been even much smaller than it proved to be. If he meant that those meetings were so thinly attended as to sink into insignificance, and that the proceedings of those present could not, in consequence, be binding on the rest of the Society, it may be mentioned that at the first session, which took place on the 3d of April, and which he attended, there were thirteen members present. On the 12th of the same month, when he was again present, the meeting was attended by twelve members. Again he, and others of his party, were present at the meetings of the 24th May; November 27th, and December 4th, when the number varied from eight to eleven.

The only occasions on which there was not a legal quorum, were *after* the by-laws had been modified, when the number of members required for the election of officers or new members, or the transaction of other important business, being placed high, it has been sometimes difficult, especially during the summer months, to obtain a sufficiently large attendance.

But let us admit, for the sake of argument, that what the gentleman said in relation to the absence of a legal quorum was true. In that case the proceedings of the individuals present were illegal, null and void. One would suppose, that attending on such occasions, the duty of this fault-finder would have been to protest against, or at least to take no part in, such proceedings. Now an examination of our minutes will show that no such protest was handed in, and that the gentleman, so far from being a silent spectator to the illegal doings of his erring colleagues, took an active part in their proceedings. On the 3d of April, he moved that the last Report of the

Treasurer be read. On the 12th of that month, he took part in the election of delegates to the American Medical Association, and on his motion it was "resolved that the committee on the Treasurer's account be requested to report a plan for the permanent investment of its funds in an accumulating form." On the 24th of May, after some discussion and explanations, he joined the rest of the members present, in the unanimous adoption of the resolution relative to the presentation of the very memorial to the State Medical Society, he so strenuously urged that Society to reject; and on the 4th of December he took an active part in the discussion which followed the reading of the report of the committee appointed to modify the by-laws of the Society—suggesting some amendments to various sections, and seemingly taking an interest in the whole matter. In such a mode of action during a succession of sessions of the Society, it is difficult to discover any very sensible evidence, on the part of the gentleman in question, of a conviction of the illegality of the proceedings to which he was witness.

The concluding charge brought by the same gentleman, against such among us as were engaged in effecting the reorganization of this Society, that in giving the notice of the early meetings, care was taken, by a few interested parties, to select the most obscure papers of the day, may be disposed of in a few brief sentences. The notices were given in the usual way—through the medium of the daily papers. The practice of issuing separate printed notices was not known in the Society. There was, therefore, no precedent for it; and until the Society had ordered the matter to be conducted otherwise, neither the Secretary or any one else, thought himself justified in following that course. As to the obscurity of the papers of the day that were selected as the organs of advertisement, we must observe that the said notices were published in the five following papers: the *North American*, the *Ledger*, the *Press*, the *Inquirer*, and the *Evening Bulletin*. If these can justly be stigmatized as the most obscure papers in which the city of Philadelphia rejoices, we ask where those of a different class are to be found? and if the gentleman's attention was directed to the notice by the merest chance, the circumstance must be ascribed to causes beyond the control of the Secretary or other officers of the Society.

The committee deem it scarcely necessary to notice, in any detail, the charge brought against such of the members of this body as memorialized the State Society, and subsequently resigned from the County Society, of having, by so doing, and by their mode of proceeding, as well on this occasion as subsequently, ignored, or openly violated the provisions of the Code of Ethics prepared by the Medical Association, and adopted by the entire body of the profession in this country; and of having been instrumental in creating dissension in and out of the ranks of the County Medi-

*He never urged the Society
that gentlemen said published in an obscure*

cal Society, thereby breaking the peace so long existing in the profession. Nor do they think it necessary to enter into an elaborate defence of the course they are pursuing by direction of this Society, and to show that in publishing the present report, they are not, as some of the members of the County Medical Society profess to believe, rendering themselves amenable to a charge of violating the said Code.

To those who are acquainted with the character and professional life and standing of the physicians thus incriminated, the idea of charging them with a violation of the Code of Ethics will appear, to say the least, ludicrous in the extreme. Few, if any, will feel inclined to believe that a body of men who have ever maintained the character of high-toned gentlemen, and never ceased, during their whole professional career, to evince a deep respect for the rules prescribed by that Code, should all at once have so far forgotten themselves as to ignore those rules, and act in a way meriting the rebuke of their medical brethren. The charge will, your committee feel confident, appear especially ludicrous to those who will bear in mind that in point of character and position the accusers are not so far superior to the accused, as to justify them in assuming the right to prefer it. Still more palpably absurd will this charge, as also that of creating trouble in the profession, appear to those aware of the nature of the transaction which led to the difficulty, and the respective part played in it by each of the contending parties.

The committee cannot for a moment believe that any person so informed will admit that the resignation from a Society like the County Medical Society, of a number of gentlemen who think they have just reason to regard themselves as having been offensively treated by it, that their prior reanimation of another and much older body, and their application to the State Medical Society to allow to that body a representation, can be construed into a violation of the Code of Ethics. Nor can they suppose that any difficulty that may have followed their action in the matter, can justly be laid at their door. It would be a hard case, indeed, if gentlemen belonging to one Society could not, without infringing the Code of Ethics, establish or revive another Society; if they could not without being amenable to the same grave charge, resign from the first of these Societies, when their connection with it has ceased to be agreeable; if they could not, without sinning against the said Code, memorialize the State organization to admit the resuscitated Society on the same footing as the other, and if they could not openly complain of the manner in which they have been treated by the Society they have left; and endeavor, in the only way in their power, to correct the unfavorable impression made on the minds of the physicians of this city and State, respecting the course they have pursued in the matter, by the misstatements uttered on the floor of the State Medical Society.

Much more natural will it be to regard the violation of the rules of

ethics—if such a thing has occurred in this matter—as being chargeable, so far as relates to the excitement which occurred in the Society, the resignations which followed, and have continued to take place ever since, and any unkind feeling that may have been since engendered among members of both parties, to the individuals to whose action in the matter the origin of that excitement is due. The secret combination of a number of the members of the County Medical Society to defeat, for some trivial cause, the election to an important office of a gentleman of high professional standing, and as respectable as any of them, and whose friends could not fail to be wounded at his pointed ejection, was a proceeding which does not impart to those who pursued it, the right of being very fastidious on the score of medical ethics. The fact of their having at the same time nearly rejected the regular nominee to the presidential chair, and succeeded in rejecting the nominees for other offices, on grounds such as have been mentioned, and thereby offending these gentlemen and their friends, is not much more commendable in an ethical point of view. Of the same nature is the repetition, so far as regards some of the nominees of the offensive proceeding. Still less entitled to complain of a disregard of ethics are those who refused to sanction the decision of the Censors in the Turnbull affair, and dismissed the latter by virtue of a vote of indefinite postponement, and who, when that affair was reconsidered and patched up, refused to visit on that individual the penalty recommended by those Censors. And surely the conduct of those individuals who took part in the debate in the State Society relative to our memorial, or of their friends who have since sanctioned that conduct, does not argue the possession by them of so high a regard for the code in question, as to give them the right to criticize the ethics of others. It is they who acted in this way that are taxable with a violation of that Code, not those who were rejected, or who were offended at beholding their friends treated offensively. It is by those who rejected the recommendation of their Censors in the Turnbull affair, not by those who resigned in consequence, that the code has been violated. It is by those who traduced members of this Society and the Society itself, at the bar of the State Society, that the Code has been ignored, not by those who were the objects of the misrepresentations and offensive remarks uttered on that occasion. Had nothing of all this taken place, no excitement would have occurred, no resignations would have been sent in, no ill feeling would have been awakened among some of the individuals who have left, and those who remain in the County Medical Society. Peace and tranquillity would now exist. +

All which is respectfully submitted.

R. LA ROCHE,
A. E. STOCKER,
S. LEWIS,
Committee.

* That is extremely doubtful